

**SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
OF
VANCOUVER AND RICHMOND COUNCILS**

May 31, 1977

A Special Joint Meeting of Vancouver and Richmond Councils was held on Tuesday, May 31, 1977, at 9:30 a.m. in the No. 1 Committee Room, Third Floor, City Hall.

PRESENT:	<u>Vancouver City Council</u>	<u>Township of Richmond</u>
	Mayor Volrich, Chairman	Mayor Blair
	Alderman D. Bellamy	Alderman K. Kumagai
	Alderman M. Brown	Alderman R.A. McMath
	Alderman M. Ford	Alderman T.E. Siddon
	Alderman M. Harcourt	Alderman W. Sigurgeirson
	Alderman D. Marzari	Alderman I.M. Vennard
	Alderman H. Rankin	
ABSENT:	Alderman B. Gerard) Leave of	Alderman L.C. Cliff
	Alderman W. Gibson) Absence	Alderman H. Steves
	Alderman W. Kennedy	Alderman J.R. Williams
	Alderman G. Puil	

CLERK TO THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING: J. Thomas

Arthur Laing Bridge

City Council at its meeting of March 23, 1976, after considering a report of the Standing Committee on Planning and Development dated March 11, 1976, dealing with a request by Richmond Council that the Arthur Laing Bridge be opened to Richmond/Vancouver commuter traffic, resolved as follows:

"THAT after the results of the study being carried out by the Technical Committee under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport are known, and the Director of Planning has had an opportunity to review the effects on the Marpole area of the City, a further joint meeting of the representatives of the Richmond and Vancouver Councils be held."

On May 11, 1977, Council considered a report of the Standing Committee on Transportation dated April 28, 1977, and approved the following recommendations of the Committee:

"A. THAT a joint meeting of Vancouver and Richmond Councils be held to discuss Richmond Municipality's proposal that the Arthur Laing Bridge be opened as an alternate commuter route to Vancouver; and that the City of Vancouver adopt the following position:

- 1) That the Arthur Laing Bridge remain closed to commuter traffic;
- 2) That public transit presently using the Oak Street Bridge be rerouted to the Arthur Laing Bridge.

B. THAT City Council hold a public meeting following the joint meeting between Vancouver and Richmond Councils."

The joint meeting with Richmond Council this day was addressed by the Acting City Engineer for Vancouver, Mr. R.C. Boyes, and Mr. Jack Brooks, Municipal Engineer for Richmond, who commented briefly on the position of their respective municipalities concerning the proposed commuter use of the Laing Bridge.

Reference was made to a Vancouver City Manager's Report dated April 22, 1977, (on file in the City Clerk's Office) which noted that following the opening of the Arthur Laing Bridge in August, 1975, Richmond Council raised concerns that the bridge was underutilized compared to the Oak Street Bridge and should be open to

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Arthur Laing Bridge (Cont'd)

Richmond/Vancouver commuter traffic. As a result of this reaction, Transport Canada convened a meeting of technical representatives from Vancouver, Richmond, Provincial Ministry of Highways and Public Works to discuss the situation. It was agreed that current and future traffic conditions would be analyzed in order to prepare information for presentation to the appropriate political bodies.

Mr. B. Wallace, Traffic Engineer, Vancouver representative on the Technical Committee, reviewed the conclusions of the Technical Committee and noted the traffic implications of a number of different treatments of the bridge and highway system were examined with particular emphasis on the situation today and that forecast over the next decade.

At present buses using the Oak Street Bridge were split fifty-fifty, Vancouver/Richmond and Vancouver/Delta. Peak hour south bound there were forty-four buses, eighteen to Richmond, and twenty-six to the South Arm of the Fraser River. The forecast for 1986 was eighty-five buses operating on Laing and Oak Street Bridges. In the event Richmond buses were rerouted over the Laing Bridge, traffic volume and growth could be expected to remain approximately the same, but transit would probably become more competitive with a shortened trip time on the Richmond/Vancouver route. South Arm buses would stay on the Oak Street system for the foreseeable future.

Questioned about provision for access and egress points for buses on the Laing Bridge, Mr. Wallace stated the Technical Committee had not studied technical design solutions, but initially it was felt it would be possible for buses to use existing routing. B.C. Hydro participated in discussions with the Technical Committee, provided input on how buses could be rerouted and indicated it was a feasible system although there was some dispute as to the number of buses involved. There had not been sufficient time for an indepth analysis. Asked what the constraints would be on implementing rerouting immediately, Mr. Wallace commented B.C. Hydro had some concerns about the location of a transit terminal in Richmond and it was possible a major review of the Richmond routes would be involved. The present transit focus was located slightly north of the Dinsmore Bridge.

Mr. Brooks, also a member of the Technical Committee, advised his impression of B.C. Hydro's position was contrary to that noted by the Vancouver Engineering representative. He did not feel there had been an agreement by Hydro on the question of rerouting as some concern had been expressed involving the number of buses that would be using the Granville Bridge. Mr. Brooks added the technical report was essentially a report of the 1980's. He urged consideration be given to the intervening period.

Mayor Volrich pointed out there was agreement at Federal, Provincial, and G.V.R.D. levels that the Laing Bridge be retained as an airport access bridge only. The Minister of Transport had indicated to City Council the Federal Government would not wish to proceed with access ramps for commuter traffic unless the request came from both the City and Provincial Government. Mayor Blair advised it was Richmond's understanding the Federal Government would be willing to proceed with access ramps if support was forthcoming from Vancouver.

Vancouver Council members stated the discussion pointed up the necessity for an early start to light rapid transit or an articulated bus system to Richmond along the Arbutus right-of-way. Citizens resented commuters from outlying districts using Vancouver residential streets and residents of the Marpole/Oak Street area had already indicated strong opposition to the proposed opening of the Laing Bridge to commuter traffic. It was suggested the bus rerouting scheme be implemented for a six-month trial period and then reviewed.

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Arthur Laing Bridge (Cont'd)

Richmond Council members agreed facilities should be developed over the next ten years, but in the interim, existing facilities should be used while the problem was being resolved by some other means. It was observed Vancouver/Richmond differences on road access to the City had an historical background dating back to 1889 when a proposed crossing of the South Arm of the Fraser River resulted in negotiations involving four levels of government spanning one and one-half years. Richmond members wondered what the attitude of Burnaby people would be if 12th Avenue was restricted at the City boundary.

Other points raised during discussion were:

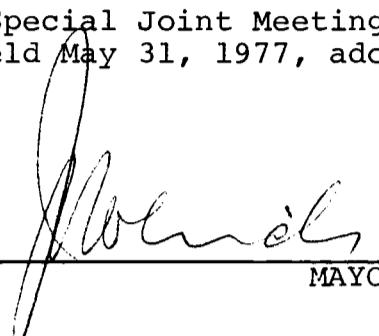
- Not all north bound commuter traffic was destined for downtown Vancouver. A considerable number of vehicles would be bound for U.B.C. and east along Marine Drive.
- The possibility of a crossing at Annacis Island in the early 1980's had not been taken into account in the Technical Committee's report.
- Future growth in Richmond would be focused on the west side of the Municipality, thus making the Laing Bridge a desirable transportation facility.
- Once the bridge was opened to commuter traffic, it would be impossible to reverse the situation if circumstances warranted.
- During the recent closure of Oak Street Bridge for reconstruction, the Laing Bridge experienced a 20% increase in traffic volume.
- The G.V.R.D. should adopt a strong stand in negotiating with senior levels of government on planning for a two-phase LRT system to be introduced as soon as possible - the first phase, covering Surrey/New Westminster/Vancouver, to be given equal priority with a second phase for a Richmond route utilizing the Laing Bridge.

Summing up the discussion Mayor Volrich stated before reaching a decision a meeting should be convened with B.C. Government and B.C. Hydro officials to discuss the implications of two possibilities that did not involve any great capital cost, i.e. the possible diversion of buses on to the Laing Bridge or the continuation of the special arrangements in force during the Oak Street Bridge shut-down. The Richmond representatives requested that the proposed meeting be a joint meeting of both Councils. The Mayor requested copies of the Technical Committee's report be distributed to members of both Councils in the interim.

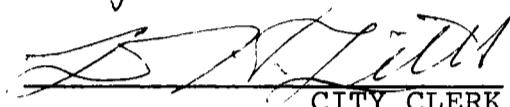
The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:10 a.m.

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The foregoing are Minutes of the Special Joint Meeting of Vancouver and Richmond Councils held May 31, 1977, adopted on June 14, 1977.



MAYOR



CITY CLERK